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On the origins of grammaticalization and other types of language change in discourse strategies

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1. Explaining language change

The ultimate goal of grammaticalization theory, as with language change more widely, must be the explanation of why the process occurs in the first place, when there is apparently no "need" for it to happen, given that language, including grammar, is perfectly serviceable at any given time (Traugott 1999b, Waltereit & Detges 2008, to name just a few references) and that any instance of language change thus does apparently not provide any improvement over the previous stage. What is referred to as *grammaticalization* is in the empirical domain. Just as with any other type of language change, grammaticalization is an empirical fact that needs to be explained, rather than being an explanation of anything itself (Roberts 1993). In other words, the core issue grammaticalization theory needs to address is, I believe, why lexical items start being used, at some point in time, with a grammatical function.

Researchers in diachronic linguistics have taken vastly varying views on this apparently paradoxical situation, also named the "logical problem of language change" (Roberts & Roussou 2003), a term modelled on the "logical problem of language acquisition" familiar from language acquisition research.

In generative grammar, the most commonly chosen approach has been to locate change in first language acquisition, where, by some mechanism or other, children would infer a grammar from the input they are exposed to which is slightly different to their caretakers' grammar underlying the same input (Lightfoot 1979, 1991, 1997, 1999, Battye & Roberts 1995, among others). In other words, language change would arise as an accumulation of small steps of "misacquisition". With respect to grammaticalization, Roberts & Roussou 2003 and van Gelderen 2004 have argued that it is driven not by, as it were, randomly erroneous acquisition but rather by a design preference for structure simplification. A variant of this line of thinking is offered by Meisel 2001, who identifies bilingualism as a key factor in language change. According to him, transmitting the weaker out of two languages to the next generation could be a significant source of misacquisition, which would then foster change.

Core generative assumptions about the language faculty and the fixation of grammar during child language acquisition mean that change can hardly be motivated from within the grammar itself. This particular theoretical commitment forces generative grammarians to locate change in some periphery of the grammatical system, that periphery most typically being acquisition.[1]

In the functionalist camp, answers to the paradox vary more widely, naturally so as these approaches are not constrained by the mentalist model of grammar. As grammar reflects usage anyway for functional linguists, patterns of use also motivate patterns of change, however in vastly varying ways according to the respective model. The functional approach that, to my mind, best addresses the underlying paradoxical situation of language change is the invisible-hand-theory initiated by Keller (1990, 1994). The upshot of Keller's theory is that languages change not because

1 Another way of locating change in a periphery, differently construed, is offered in Longobardi's (2001) Inertia Theory, where syntactic change is construed as a mere knock-on effect of change in some other (more peripheral, as it were) module such as the lexicon.

there is any point for them changing on and by themselves, but because speakers, in their desire to communicate convincingly, have good reasons to "tweak" the conventions of language, i.e. to use forms not for their meaning but for the perceived advantages in communication that they may offer, at the risk of not entirely complying with their conventional meaning. For example, according to Keller, the prestige decline of the Old High German high-status noun *vrouwe* 'lady', which became the neutral *Frau* 'woman' in Modern German, was triggered by a politeness strategy whereby speakers tended to extend the usage of *vrouwe* also to address women of lower social status, thereby assuring themselves obvious advantages in the communication. Likewise it may be suggested that with reference to 'physical handicap', *diversely abled* is replacing *disabled*, which in turn replaced *handicapped*, all presumably out of a wish to avoid using a perceived taboo expression while still ensuring successful reference. In turn, the replacing expressions came to be avoided themselves relatively soon, given that the underlying taboo was unaffected. Keller's (1990, 1994) book provides many comparable examples of language change. The role of politeness for semantic change has also been stressed in Beeching (2005, 2007). In other words, the paradox referred to above ceases to be one, as successful communication is argued to require the occasional breach of linguistic conventions, those "non-compliant" usages eventually turning into conventions themselves (even though with a different function than the underlying breaches of convention had). The outcome of this is by no means "better" than the situation prior to change, nor need it be.

This view of language change as driven by, ultimately, rhetoric strategies may seem unproblematic for some instances of lexical change, particularly with euphemisms where such changes can often be witnessed in real time during a relatively short timespan. However, the same mechanism is much less obvious where grammatical change is concerned. Detges (2000), (2001), (2004) and Detges & Waltereit (2002) have suggested that grammatical change, including but not limited to grammaticalization, are driven by rhetoric strategies as well, albeit often less easily discernible than for those cases of lexical change. In Waltereit & Detges (2007), we suggested that speakers' strategies are also responsible for the rise of discourse markers and modal particles. In particular, we argued that the function of the target is essentially a by-product of the type of strategy its diachronic forerunner was used for in discourse. In other words, current synchronic meaning reflects earlier discourse patterns. Taken seriously, this approach means that, if items of grammar share functional properties, then the discourse patterns for which their diachronic forerunners were used equally share certain properties. In this vein, we should be able to differentiate the discourse strategies that eventually gave rise to grammatical items from those that gave rise to discourse markers, modal particles, and so on. According to the level of abstraction chosen we may refine the differentiation further, i.e., a more granular distinction of grammatical items is expected to match a more granular distinction of discourse strategies, etc.

In this paper I would like to exemplify this model of change with one form of the French language, the adverb *bien*, which has yielded a discourse marker, a modal particle, and a grammatical item, namely a concessive conjunction.

The model furthermore has implications for the notions currently discussed in grammaticalization theory, namely subjectification and persistence, as well as for the much-debated distinction of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization. We first need to discuss at a more general level how to recognize an innovation in language change.

2. What sets off grammaticalization?

2.1. Normal variability of speech?

Recently, Croft (2010) has challenged the notion popular in grammaticalization theory that change is set off by deliberate innovations, which, as the term would suggest, need to be thought of as relatively rare. He points out that those innovations are rarely if ever observed. Croft suggests

instead that morphosyntactic change, including grammaticalization, is triggered by natural variation of lexical choice in discourse. His argument relies crucially on an analogy with sound change. Research in acoustic phonetics has found that there is always variation in the production of any particular phonological representation, even within the speech of a single speaker and even within the same utterance of any such speaker (cf. Ohala 1989). Two instances of the same phoneme or other phonological representation are never entirely identical in actual speech. Ohala argues that at least in some cases, diachronic sound change originates in this articulatory variation. In other words, sound change is the result of the selection of a variant out of the range of variation inherent in normal speech, rather than requiring any specific departure from the conventions that are underlying those representations. Croft suggests that morphosyntactic change comes about in the same way. He relies on an experiment made by Chafe (1980) and colleagues in the *Pear Stories*. The Pear Stories are a film containing no language; they were filmed with a view to obtaining a *tertium comparationis* for comparing the verbalization of experience across languages. Croft noted that the variation in the expressions participants chose to verbalize the film scenes often mirrored meaning changes in grammaticalization clines. For example, some participants used the verb *to walk*, where others would use *to go* for the same state of affairs. This mirrors semantic change in light verbs – French *aller* 'to go', used as source construction for stems from Latin *ambulare* 'to walk'. In other words, synchronic variation as a result of speaker choice in verbalizing experience mirrors diachronic change. Croft finds that a similar correspondence can be established for a variety of grammatical domains. To make the suggested analogy clear: Just as phonetic change is claimed to be the outcome of essentially un-controllable natural variation inherent in spontaneous speech, so would morphosyntactic change, including grammaticalization, be the outcome of essentially arbitrary speaker choice when it comes to verbalizing the same piece of experience. An important implication of this is that innovation appears to be a rather ubiquitous and frequent thing – it happens all the time in ordinary speech, rather than being rare, as the expressivity- and rhetoric-based accounts of grammaticalization would lead one to believe. In other words, diachronic change in general, not only sound change, is driven by the inherent variability of speech, rather than being the result of singular events of innovative language use eventually filtering through the speech community. This approach raises the question of whether there is a genuine paradox of language change at all, since it implicitly questions the assumption of diachronic stability inherent in the formulation of that paradox.

While I agree with Croft that the fact that the supposed innovations underlying change are rarely if ever actually observed somewhat weakens the idea of change being driven by them, his arguments are open to challenge as well.

Firstly, the analogy between sound change and morphosyntactic change seems less than entirely felicitous. Natural variation in articulation reflects essentially a varying degree of perfection in individuals in meeting a particular *given target*, namely the phonological representation as prescribed by conventions of the language. This is, Croft suggests, presumably rooted in the fact that "the level of neuromuscular control over articulatory gestures needed for identical (invariant) productions of a phoneme is beyond a speaker's control" (Croft 2010: 4). This however does not easily transfer to the kind of morphosyntactic variation that Croft observed. Morphosyntactic variability can easily be attributed to the fact that any state of affairs in the world is matched by various items and constructions of language, which in turn reflects the basic fact that constructions come in vastly varying degrees of semantic generality. Verbalization varies not because speaker cannot control it, but because there are so many options available. To choose a simple example, a particular car could be referred to as *a black Ford Focus*, *a compact car*, *a vehicle*, *a car with a Swiss registration number*, etc., all of which are perfectly compliant with the language's conventions in addition to possibly being truthful characterisations of the referent in question. We would therefore expect there to be a certain amount of variation between individuals verbalizing the same experience. In other words, natural variation in articulation and natural variation in morphosyntax arise for entirely different and essentially unrelated reasons.

Secondly, it is not easy to see how even in the case of phonology, change could originate in natural variation in articulation. For if indeed this natural variation reflects insufficient "neuromuscular control over articulatory gestures needed for identical (invariant) productions of a phoneme", we would expect hearers to be equally unable to replicate the variation thus generated in their own speech for exactly the same reasons.

In a way, then, Croft's argument, as well the underlying utterance-based evolutionary theory of language change (Croft 2000), is based on the same assumption of "errors in transmission" as source of language change also invoked by generative grammarians, only that for him those errors in transmission are located in language use rather than in language acquisition. As far as I can see, the sole basis in fact for this assumption is the apparent level of complexity involved in both acquisition and use, thought to be "too hard" to operate seamlessly. To the best of my knowledge though, it has never been empirically substantiated that any actual change really originated in these presumed errors. Why not simply assume the obvious, namely that even though both acquiring and speaking a language are amazingly complex, human beings are actually up to it?

To summarise this point, the challenge that Croft's theory has posed to the paradox of change appears essentially unfounded. Conventions of language are there, they are abided by, and failure to do so does not go unnoticed.

2.2. How to recognise an innovation?

While Croft's argument that grammaticalization is simply a by-product of natural variability in the verbalization of experience cannot be followed here, the opposite view that language change, including grammaticalization, is entirely driven by individual acts of creativity replicated by a mass of followers may be too naïve either. A crucial point here is the semantic relation between the lexical and the grammatical stage of the form.

From a semantic point of view, incipient grammaticalization represents either a metonymic, or a taxonomic (semantic widening) change. Grammaticalization as recruitment of lexical items to the grammar instantiates metonymy; "secondary" grammaticalization, i.e. the change from already grammatical to "more grammatical", i.e. less marked, is, in terms of lexical semantics, semantic widening (Detges & Waltereit 2002). To choose a standard example for grammaticalization as change from-lexical-to-grammatical, the English *going-to* future tense is metonymically related to its source construction, the verb of movement *to go to [verb]*. Someone who moves towards a certain place in order to do something implies that they will perform that activity in the future. Turning to secondary grammaticalization, consider the Old French marked French negation *ne...pas* 'not at all'. At this stage, the construction had already developed from its original meaning 'not a step' (cf. Detges & Waltereit 2002 and many others)

(1) Climborins pas ne fut produme.
'Climborin was not a brave man at all.' (Chanson de Roland, 12C)

It is "marked" because the proposition must be activated in previous discourse (Hansen & Visconti 2009). The form has gradually turned into standard negation in Modern French (see Hansen & Visconti 2009, and many others). Now, standard negation is logically superordinate to marked negation, because the extension of the former includes the extension of the latter. Hence the change is, in lexical semantic terms, an instance of semantic widening.

A type of semantic relation familiar from lexical change, but unattested in grammaticalization, is metaphor. One of the most famous example for lexical change based on metaphor is certainly *mouse* as 'computer pointing device', from its earlier meaning of 'small rodent'. Earlier research on

grammaticalization argued that metaphor plays a role in grammaticalization, too (Heine, Claudi & Hünnemeyer 1991, Traugott & König 1991). However, Detges & Waltereit (2002: 167-168) have argued that grammatical changes that involve inferencing, as grammaticalization does, cannot involve metaphor because inferencing requires that the extension of what is said and what is intended overlap. This is not the case with metaphor. It may, however, be the case with metonymy and semantic widening, with ensuing potential ambiguity in early stages. Often, but not always (Koch 2004) do metonymies imply an overlap of referents. For example, in the above case of the *going-to future* early examples are often, from today's perspective, ambiguous between a lexical verb and a grammatical interpretation. Likewise, the very fact that standard negation includes marked negation entails that they may not always be distinguishable. On the other hand, it is the in very essence of metaphor that source and target meaning do not overlap, but are starkly different (cf. Blank 1997). In other words, a metaphor cannot be ambiguous between a metaphorical and its literal meaning.

What referential overlap means specifically for innovations is that in the early stages it is not easy to recognise an innovation as such, since the construction in question could as well instantiate the "old" meaning. The very concept of *bridging context*, i.e. a context that leads from one interpretation of a form to another (Heine 2002) relies on the availability of the two readings. In other words, an innovation based on metaphor as semantic relation can unequivocally be recognised as such, whereas an innovation based on metonymy or semantic widening/narrowing often cannot. This potential ambiguity makes it very hard to observe any actual innovation in linguistic, or other, behaviour. For unusual, i.e. potentially innovative, behaviour can, in principle, be accounted for in two different ways. Either it is unusual because the underlying circumstances are unusual and these prompted appropriate activity, in line with existing conventions, but nevertheless unusual because the circumstances were so extraordinary. Or it is unusual not because of anything particular in the underlying circumstances but because conventions have not been applied in the way they were supposed to. Only the latter can count as a genuine innovation.

To give an example with respect to linguistic conventions: One of the most notable features of Albert Camus' novel *L'étranger* 'The stranger' (1942) is the near-complete absence of the simple past (*passé simple*), which would have been the usual (aoristic) past tense in narrative accounts of past events. Rather, Camus uses the compound past (*passé composé*) instead, which at the time was already common for narrating past events in spoken language, but restricted to resultative, i.e. not genuinely temporal uses in the written language at the time. Early literary and linguistic commentators of the novel tended to analyse this as an adroit stylistic move: the concatenation of resultatives created an impression of the sentences being almost unconnected stumbling blocks rather than forming a coherent narrative. This was taken as appropriately conveying the fragmentation of the protagonist's experience and his solitude, in line with the existentialist spirit of the period. In other words, they suggested that the *passé composé* was the right tense to use because it reflected the underlying states of affairs. The choice of tenses was unusual, but warranted by the unusual subject matter. More recently though, Camus' novel tends to be viewed as spearheading a more and more widespread use of a narrative *passé composé* in writing, which in a significant share of today's fiction is used without any particular stylistic effect attached to it (cf. De Saussure 2006: 106), i.e. it now appears as an essentially linguistic, rather than stylistic, innovation that changed existing linguistic conventions. Incidentally, this would also be secondary grammaticalization – the *passé composé* moving from marked to unmarked status as the default past tense even in writing. In other words: Camus' move has been classed as an innovation *retroactively*, because it was *followed* by similar behaviour; in its time it could not have been ascertained whether this was actually a linguistic innovation. If it had not been widely adopted, the early interpretation as a stylistic experiment would have prevailed.

What this shows, I believe, is that often a change in conventions that would be relevant for grammaticalization can only be ascertained as such after the event. The basis for this limitation is

not only the methodological issue that today's researchers may not have the intimate familiarity with the past state of the language required to perceive the more subtle changes, but also a more principled one. Contemporary observers, including hearers of the potential innovation, can never be certain (except in the case of metaphor) whether they are witnessing a linguistic innovation, i.e. a breach of an existing convention, or whether what the speaker says may be unusual simply because what they talk about is unusual. This is entirely independent of whether the speaker intended to be innovative or not.

In other words, while language change, in the view advocated here, does ultimately rely on individual speakers' creative speech, we do not need to posit that innovative speakers deliberately chose to depart from existing conventions only to be followed by a crowd of unimaginative imitators. Rather, language change may be more of a collective process, and the respective roles of innovating vs. propagating members of the speech community's could be less distinctly separated from one another than the classical references to these concepts in Coseriu (1957) and Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968) might lead one to believe.

3. Different pathways of the same source construction: French adverb *bien* 'well'

In the following, I will describe the pathways that one particular item, the French adverb *bien* 'well', has taken to yield a variety of procedural, i.e. non-conceptual, meanings (cf. Wilson /Sperber 1993: 1). This will illustrate how the outcome of the change is to a certain extent at least determined by the rhetoric strategies a given item is used to, rather than by its coded content as such.

3.1.Three contemporary functions

The first procedural use of *bien* of note here is a concessive conjunction *bien que* 'even though', a genuinely grammatical function:

(2) J'y ai participé, bien que je sois conscient du risque.

I took part, even though I am aware of the risk.

What I mean by "grammatical function" here is that it has bien que's position is syntactically fixed, namely at the left margin of a clause. Furthermore its scope is syntactically fixed as well – it has scope over a clause. Moreover, it has a function at a propositional (ideational) level.

Another offspring of *bien* is its use as a discourse marker:

(3) GAS : non le problème oui c'est c'est la politique d'immigration
CG : voilà oui d'accord bien non parce que votre formule elle peut être ambiguë oui elle peut être interprétée hein y en a plein qui disent le problème c'est l'immigration
GAS : No the problem, yes, is the immigration policy
CG: Right, I agree, well no, because what you say may be ambiguous: it may be read, well, many people say the problem is immigration itself [CLAPI]

This is, of course, fundamentally different from a grammatical function as its position is not determined in grammatical terms – as a discourse marker it is placed at the margin of the stretch of discourse it applies to, rather than in relation to a unit that could be described in terms of constituent

structure. Concomitantly, its scope in this function is highly variable (Hansen 1998b), i.e. its scope is not defined on the basis of the clause or other form-type based unit (as the grammatical conjunction would have been). Rather the speaker is essentially free, in their construction of discourse, to extend the scope of a discourse marker to what they choose to be the stretch of discourse relevant for it (cf. Waltereit & Detges 2007).

Moreover, on a semantic level, the discourse marker has, as is typical for them and as the name implies, a textual or interactional function, rather than a propositional (ideational) one as the grammatical function is. In this example, *bien* is used as a self-correction device – that is a discourse-structuring function.

The third variant under discussion here is *bien* as a modal particle in French. These occupy, in a way, an intermediate position between the grammatical item and the discourse marker (cf. Hansen 2008). In example (3) *bien*

(4) Vous avez bien reçu mon message?

You've got my message, did't you ?

has an interactional function – it orientates the question towards a positive answer. This is a function at speech-act level, which is interactional by definition. Modal particles share their interactional function with a relevant subset of discourse markers. However they share important properties with grammatical items as well, namely their fixed syntactic position (in French, immediately following the finite verb viz. the finite part of the verb) and the rigidity of their scope, which is identified with the clause.

Table 1 summarises the differences and commonalities of the three forms.

	Outcomes of adverb *bien*		
	Concessive conjunction	Modal particle	Discourse marker
Scope	*Clause*	*Clause*	*Stretch of discourse*
Syntactic position	*Fixed*	*Fixed*	*Variable*
Type of meaning	*Propositional*	*Interactional*	*Metatextual/ Interactional*

We now need to address the question how these outcomes can arise from the same lexical base. The assumption that these are "diachronic outcomes of the same lexical base" implies that they are independent semantic representations themselves, rather than being derived synchronically from one and the same semantic representation. In other words, with respect to the monosemy/polysemy/homonymy debate in semantics (cf. Hansen 1998b), the approach advocated here is firmly in the polysemy camp – a stance that is, as Traugott & Dasher (2002: 16) point out, virtually necessary when tackling semantic change.

In the following I will argue that the change is driven by argumentative usage of the adverb *bien* in discourse in a way that takes advantage of the semantic content of the adverb, thus eventually conventionalising the pragmatic meaning.

3.2. The rise of the modal particle *bien* from scalar argumentation

Hansen (1998b) has shown that the modal use of *bien* as in (3) above is polyphonous, i.e. it incorporates, as part of its conventional meaning, an anticipation of hearer's stance. Incidentally, this characteristic justifies the label 'modal' according to Givon's (1995) theory of modality. How

does this relate to the lexical meaning of the adverb *bien* 'well'? Waltereit and Detges (2007) suggested that the relevant connection is the use of the adverb bien well in *scalar argumentation*, as in (14):

(5) Et mesires Pierres respondi: “Ba!”, fist il, “de n’avés vous oï comment Troies le grant fu destruite ne par quel tor ? – “Ba ouil !”, fisent li Blak et li Commain, “nous l’avons bien oï dire.” (*La Conquête de Constantinople*, CVI, 31, BFM)
And Mylord Pierre answered: Ba, he said, haven’t you heard about how Troy the great was destroyed and in which way this happened? - Of course, said Blak and Commain, we heard clearly / a lot about it.’

The relevant parts of the dialogue are repeated in (5):

(6) Pierre: Haven’t you heard about the destruction of Troy?
Blak & Commain: Yes, we heard a lot about it.

In other words, Blak and Commain are countering the suggestion that they did not hear about Troy's destruction by stressing that they heard “a lot” about it, i.e. in order to convey that a particular state of affairs is indeed the case (contrary to what the interlocutor expects), they claim that that state of affairs is the case *to a high degree*. What is at stake in this argument is the common ground – whether the fact that Blak and Commain have heard about this event. This is scalar argumentation: to make the point that they heard about Troy's destruction it would have been sufficient to simply say so; but by making the stronger point that they heard about it to a high degree, the weaker point that they really wanted to make in the first place is made by scalar implication. This is “overuse” - speakers say more than they need to. Of course this is possible only with predicates that are inherently gradable, i.e. that lend themselves to be positioned on a scale.

Already in Old French, the modal use is conventionalised, as can be seen from uses with stative predicates, i.e. those that are not inherently gradable:

(7) Ceste virge dont j' ai retraite Et rimee ceste matere Bien est de Dieu et de sa mere. (Gautier de Coinci, 1218)
This virgin whose story I have told in rhymes is indeed from God and his mother

If the assumption of scalar argumentation as the basis for the conventionalisation of the modal use is correct, then we have an explanation for at least some of the formal properties of modal particles referred to above. As the scalar argumentation strategy relates propositions expressing states of affairs, it is natural that the resulting form (the modal particle) takes propositions in their scope. Its syntactic position, namely immediately following the finite verb, may at least be linked to the fact that the underlying strategy focuses on the veracity of the assertion, which in turn is expressed in the finite verb form.

3.3. *Bien* in concessive complex sentences

Let us now turn to the concessive conjunction *bien que*, a genuinely grammatical item. The first thing to note here is that the adverb *bien* 'well' was used, already in Old French, to concede a point in argumentation, without being part of an actual concessive conjunction. An example for this strategy in discourse is (7):

(8) Dahez ait qui vos oï *onques*, Ne vit onques mes, que je soie! Bien puet estre, mes je

pansoie, Que le gué me contredeïstes; Bien sachiez que mar me feristes. (Chev. Charrette, 1177, TFA)
'Cursed be whoever saw or heard you, even if it's myself ! It may <u>well</u> be that you forbade me the ford, but I was deep in thought. You should know well that you did me wrong.'

The speaker concedes that his interlocutor did not allow him to cross the ford but dismisses this on the grounds that he "was deep in thought". The relevant parts of the dialogue are repeated below:

(9) [It is WELL possible that you forbade me the ford] [BUT I was deep in thought.]
p q

The second proposition is introduced with the equivalent of *but*, a conjunction that has genuinely argumentative meaning. According to standard assumptions of argumentation theory (Anscombre & Ducrot 1977), *but* characterises its proposition (*q*) as yielding an argument whose force outweighs the argumentative force of a previous proposition (*p*). Now, the proposition *p*, in this case, is marked with *bien*, which, as we have seen in the previous subsection, makes it argumentatively stronger than it would be without that adverb. This, however, does not override the force of *mais* 'but' in proposition *q* which is, as it were, working in the opposite direction. In other words, no matter how strong the force of *p* is on and by itself, it cannot outweigh *q* as long as the latter is marked by the conjunction *mais* 'but' (cf. Haspelmath & König 1988, Leuschner 2006, and others). In a discussion of the English concessive element *although*, Iten (2000, 2005) suggests that this word encodes the following procedure (where *P* refers to the clause containing *although*):

(2) Suspend an inference from what follows (i.e. *P*) which would result in an unresolvable contradiction.

What is interesting about this characterization is that the meaning of a concessive item is explicitly described as an instruction to the hearer in processing the text: "[T]he use of although saves the hearer the effort of inferring a conclusion that would have to be discarded again immediately because it contradicts a more manifest assumption" (Iten 2005: 180). The counterpart of an inference to be made by the hearer is an implicature on the side of the speaker. I would like to refer to this as "implicature of irrelevance":

Implicature of irrelevance: Given that the conclusion arising from *q* is characterized as outweighing the conclusion arising from *p*, it does not matter whether *p* is the case to a high degree ('well') or not to a high degree.

It is interesting to note that this is apparently based on the same scalarity as is the modal particle *bien*. *Bien* conveys that its host proposition occupies a higher rung on the respectively relevant scale than the same proposition without *bien*.

Note that in the example above, the concessive effect is not grammaticalised; it is produced compositionally from the contributions of the adverb *bien* and the conjunction *mais*. Crucially, in this configuration, the implicature of irrelevance conveyed by *bien* can only arise in combination with the argumentative conjunction *mais* 'but'.

An already grammaticalised use of this in Old French is the conjunction *se bien* 'even if'.

(3) Le chevalier siudre n' osai, Que folie feire dotasse. Et, <u>se</u> je <u>bien</u> siudre l'osasse, Ne sai ge que il se devint. (Yvain, c. 1180, TFA)
'I did not dare to follow the knight out of fear to do some folly. And <u>even if</u> I had dared to follow him I would not know what had become of him.'

Finally, in Modern French, *bien* is part of a grammaticalized conjunction *bien que* 'even if'.

(4) J'y ai participé, *bien que* je sois conscient du risque.
I took part, even though I am aware of the risk.

Again, the formal features of the outcome match those of the underlying rhetoric strategy. The strategy underlying the grammaticalization of *bien que* has scope over a proposition, grammatically expressed by a clause. The outcome, as a conjunction, has grammatical scope over a clause as well.

3.4. The rise of *bien* as a discourse marker

The third outcome of the adverb *bien* is a discourse marker – a process often referred to a pragmaticalization (cf. Dostie 2004 and references cited therein). The adverb *bien* can be used, without requiring any change in its own semantic representation, as an interjection to express approval (positive evaluation). The first diachronic step to note is a metonymic change in the interjection use from 'positive evaluation' to 'agreement' – things one agrees to tend to be things one evaluates positively, without the former entailing the latter though in a strictly logical sense.

(5) (Ha ! Vous voullez avoir plaisance ? Bien, vous l'aurez pour ung taudis, Mais gens qui prennent leur aisance Se retreuvent les plus mauldis. (La Chesnaye, 1508, FRANTEXT)
Ha ! You want fun ? All right, you'll have it for a hutch, but people who take their freedom find themselves the most cursed ones.

The next step in the interjective use is from 'agreement' to 'change of activity'. Again, a change of activity in joint action often implies that interlocutors are satisfied with the preceding activity – thence the metonymic link between them.

(6) Finet : Monsieur, si la chose estoit telle Que pensasse qu'honestement Vous la peussiez faire, vrement Je vous conseilleroy la faire ; Mais c'est chose qu'on ne doit faire, Je vous pry gardez vous en bien.
Taillebras : Bien, va t'en :. (Baïf, 1573, FRANTEXT)
F: Sir, if the matter was such that I would honestly think you could do it, then I would advise you to do it; but it's something one should not do; I implore you not to do it.
T: *Enough, go away.*

As a last step, the formula *bien* used to change activities has come to be used, since the 17th century, as a genuine discourse marker, i.e. coordinating the joint construction of discourse rather than action in the wider sense:

(7) ROY : Tu cognoistras comment sans aucun artifice, Je te veux faire voir la volonté des Dieux.
CHRYSEIDE. Je sçay que cét Hymen leur est trop odieux.
ROY. Bien bien, nous le verrons, cependant prenons place Au plus prés de l'Autel où doit fondre ta glace. (Jean Mairet, 1630, FRANTEXT)
R : You will see that I will let you see the Gods' will without any tricks.
C: I know they hate this nuptial bond.
R: Bien, bien, let's see, however let's take a seat next to the altar where you will lose your coldness.

As with the preceding outcomes of the adverb, the features of the contemporary outcomes of *bien* are consonant with the rhetorical strategies they were arguably used for. Actions aimed at

establishing boundaries between units of discourse, as with sequences of joint human action more widely, are not necessarily constrained by grammatical boundaries and will only incidentally coincide with the latter. Likewise, discourse markers, as the involuntary outcome of those strategies, have variable scope over stretches of discourse, rather than being defined in terms of grammatical constituents. Additionally, they have, of course, a discourse-related, i.e. a textual or interactional function rather than an ideational one (as the lexical item they originated from had).

What we see, then, is that an important subset of functional change is governed by the patterns of communication the relevant items are being used for creatively by speakers, rather than by the lexical properties of these items themselves. If anything, items lend themselves to particular uses more than to others, thereby constraining, to a certain extent, their further diachronic trajectory.

Table 2 summarises the scope of the underlying strategic use and the contemporary properties of the three outcomes of *bien* discussed in this article.

	bien		
Scope of strategic use	Coordination of construction of discourse	Common ground	Proposition
Outcome	Discourse marker	Modal particle	Concessive conjunction

To summarize, the point being made here is that lexical items, and constructions in general, have a certain potential for argumentative or otherwise strategic use in discourse. Speakers may take advantage of this, flouting existing conventions of language or conventions of use.

According to the scope of the argumentative/strategic use, the outcome can be grammaticalization, pragmaticalization, or other types of change.

We can now move on to a discussion of some of the wider theoretical concepts relevant for grammaticalization that are at issue under this approach, namely subjectification, persistence, and finally the distinction between grammaticaliation and pragmaticalization.

4. Subjectification

Subjectification has been one of the most prominent concepts in research on semantic change and grammaticalization alike, most commonly associated with the work of Elizabeth Traugott. The essence of the concept, continuously refined over the years (cf. Traugott 1989, 1995, 1999, Traugott & Dasher 2002), is the generalisation that meanings tend to move diachronically from the ideational, "objective", to the non-propositional, speaker-centred, interactional, "subjective" domain, but not in the other direction, as witnessed perhaps most strikingly in the development of discourse markers. While this claim has received ample support, both theoretical and empirical, in a large number of studies, there is, to my knowledge, no convincing explanation as to why subjectification arises in the first place.

Under the model proposed here, subjectification is a by-product of metonymic meaning change motivated by argumentation. If speakers use forms with ideational meanings for interactional purposes, then these forms will take on interactional meaning over time. The nature of that interactional purpose depends on what effects the underlying ideational meaning lends itself to, as we have seen in the preceding sections. In other words, subjectification as a tendency of diachronic change is a very high-level generalisation that abstracts away from the more lower-level tendencies of semantic change directly motivated by the rhetoric strategies that are driving them.

A notable exception to the subjectification tendency is what happens in "secondary" grammaticalization, i.e. the generalisation over time of marked constructions, un-marking them in the process. Examples in point are French bi-partite negation, which developed from marked (discourse-activated) to unmarked, i.e. not requiring specific discourse constraints (Hansen & Visconti 2009), or the generalisation of the *passé composé* from requiring present relevance to unmarked past tense status, as referred to earlier. It seems to fair to say that in this kind of change meaning is actually "de-subjectified" - the speaker involvement implied by discourse activation in negation, and by present relevance in past tense constructions, respectively, is progressively removed. The resulting standard negation and past tense constructions involve speaker stance to a much lesser degree than the constructions they originated from.

Semantically, these changes instantiate semantic widening, as opposed to metonymy, the latter being involved in those instances of grammaticalization that conform with subjectification. This reflects a difference in the rhetoric strategy underlying the change: Whereas with the latter, meaning is arguably used to imply an interactional purpose, the former are used to take advantage of the effect associated with the rarity, or markedness, of conventional use of that meaning itself.

What this might suggest, then, is that subjectification is perhaps, in a way, a by-product of argumentation driving language change, and thus associated with those types of language change that result from argumentation, rather than being a genuine diachronic tendency in its own right.

5. Persistence

Any change of meaning, including grammaticalization, is by definition constrained by the requirement of semantic relations holding between the source and the outcome of the change. grammaticalization involving either metonymy or semantic widening (not however metaphor), it is even more constrained than semantic change more widely.

Ultimately, research in semantic change, and also grammaticalization, is concerned with the explanation of relating earlier and later stages of meaning. That the relationship between the two is not entirely arbitrary is captured in the notion of "persistence" - the observation that an item at a later stage in the grammaticalization process may retain features from an earlier stage (Hopper 1991). Recently, Hansen (2008) has suggested that persistence may not only exist in, as she calls it, the "backwards" sense familiar from earlier grammaticalization theory, but also in a "forwards" sense, namely by restricting the pathways a particular item can take in its diachronic trajectory. As she points out (2008: 228), the very fact that semantic maps as conceived by Haspelmath (1997) reliably predict patterns of polysemy while excluding others in some domains is evidence for semantic change, including grammatical change, being heavily restricted. In a similar vein, Visconti (2006) suggests that lexical semantics plays an important role in change.

Under the proposal made here, persistence expresses the generalization that some conventional meanings lend themselves better to convey, by implicature or by some other kind of pragmatic operation, particular concepts than others. For example, the concept of motion lends itself to implying futurity, as witnessed in the countless instances of grammaticalization that turn motion verbs into future tenses. This is facilitated by a relatively straightforward metonymic link between movement towards a goal and a future action implied by that goal. By contrast, it is much rarer for a motion verb to grammaticalize into a past tense, but the latter is attested just as well. For example, in Catalan, the verb *anar* 'to go' turned into a past tense auxiliary (the *perfet perifràstic*):

(8) *El seu discurs va causar un gran impacte en l'auditori.* '
It his talk go:3SG produce a great effect on the-audience
His/her talk produced a great effect on the audience.' (Detges 2004: 211)

Detges (2004) argues that this function arose metonymically as well, albeit in a slightly unusual way.

In medieval narrative writing there was a popular discourse strategy that consisted in highlighting important events of a story by focusing on their incipient stages, in, as it were, slow-motion. This is evident in recurrent formulae of the kind “and then he goes on to do X”, “and then they start doing Y” etc. The Catalan *anar* 'go' construction can be taken as a grammaticalization of this strategy. It arguably took over past tense meaning because those narratives referred to the past even if expressed in present tense. In other words, the metonymic link between the past and this discourse strategy is, in this case, based in the characteristics of the *genre* where the strategy was predominantly used. We see, then, that while motion verbs predominantly develop into future tense markers, they are not inherently blocked to develop into other tenses including past tense.

For Detges (2004), this suggests that grammaticalization paths, and similar generalizations over diachronic trajectories, are not “hard-wired” in the mind or in the lexical meaning of the involved items. Rather grammaticalization paths reflect likely associations of concepts in language use; given suitable circumstances though, meanings may be pragmatically associated in a way that would seem rather unlikely in the abstract.

In a way, then, persistence is the lexical-semantic counterpart of Eckardt's (2006) “Avoid pragmatic overload” principle – it reflects a degree of *suitability* that some meanings have to be used for particular pragmatic strategies while not excluding others in principle.

What makes the lexical item *bien* so intriguing, then, is that its conceptual content lends itself to so many different interactional uses.

6. Grammaticalization vs. pragmaticalization

In recent years the question of whether the rise of discourse markers is an instance of grammaticalization has been debated controversially. Some have insisted that the two are distinct processes that should be carefully kept apart (Waltereit 2006). The main argument for this view is that the rise of discourse markers as a process simply does not, by and large, comply with the established criteria of grammaticalization as put forward in the seminal article by Lehman (1985) (Hansen 2008: 55-58). For example, whereas grammaticalization means scope reduction (which is one of Lehmann's criteria), discourse markers tend to have wider scope than their diachronic predecessors (or, more precisely, not to be constrained in their grammatical scope). The term *pragmaticalisation* has been chosen instead (Erman & Kotsinas 1993). Others, however, have argued that the two processes nevertheless share too many characteristics for such a distinction to be meaningful (Brinton 2001) and that they can indeed be subsumed under the broader category of constructionalization (Traugott 2008).

To a certain extent, the issue is of course merely terminological – if the scope of the term “grammaticalization” is suitably extended, then the rise of discourse markers can very well be included in it. Conversely, one can insist on keeping them separate and choosing two different terms instead (cf. Van Olmen’s (2010) critique of the debate). The more fundamental issue however seems to be why the underlying items take such different diachronic trajectories. The answer that arises from the approach taken here is that lexical items develop differently because they are being used for different purposes in discourse. According to the level of abstraction that is chosen for the description of these trajectories, any two of them will share more or fewer traits. In other words, it seems perhaps less adequate to assume that processes such as grammaticalization or pragmaticalization are “out there”, with diachronic trajectories conforming to either one or the other; rather it would appear that grammaticalization and pragmaticalization are both abstractions over diachronic trajectories each of which is ultimately determined by the pragmatic strategies chosen by speakers. As the modal particle use of *bien* shows, intermediate pathways between pragmaticalization and grammaticalization are perfectly possible, thereby lending further support to the notion that “pragmaticalization” and “grammaticalization” represent generalisations over a large, while not exhaustive, number of individual trajectories rather than being types to which those

trajectories must conform.

7. Conclusion

In this article I have argued that grammaticalization, alongside with related types of change such as pragmaticalization and the rise of modal particles, arises as a side-effect of strategic language use by speakers. The outcome of these processes is determined by the strategy the underlying lexical items are being used for, rather than being significantly determined by the lexical content of these items or by the pre-set characteristics of types of change.

High-level generalisations that have been identified in recent research such as subjectification, pragmaticalization, and persistence are certainly not made obsolete under this approach but they need to be complemented by significant lower-level generalisations.

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TFA = Textes de Français Ancien [http://www.lib.uchicago.edu./efts/ARTFL/projects/TLA]

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